

# Derby City Dragons

## Breast Cancer Survivor Dragon Boat Racing Team

Spring 2025

291 Hubbards Lane, Suite 172-238 • Louisville, KY 40207-8203

Vol. 6 No. 1



### About Us:

As Louisville's first Dragon Boat Racing team we are proud to be part of the 300+ Breast Cancer Survivor Dragon Boat

Racing teams throughout the world. Our team was founded in March, 2013, as we sought to strengthen our spirits, prove that we weren't defined by our shared diagnosis and support each other in our individual struggles. The Derby City Dragons is a team that welcomes breast cancer survivors, regardless of age, fitness level or previous experience. We share a zest for fun, life, health and sportsmanship, and promise that members will build new lifelong friendships as they "awaken the dragon within themselves!"

For information about our team and to donate to help support our mission, our webpage is:

<http://www.derbycitydragons.org/>

Contact us at:

[drbycitydragons@gmail.com](mailto:drbycitydragons@gmail.com)

Find us on Facebook at Derby City Dragons - Breast Cancer Survivor Dragon Boat Team:

[@derbycitydragonsbcsdragonboatteam](https://www.facebook.com/derbycitydragonsbcsdragonboatteam)



### The Best of 2024 and the Hopes for 2025

By Susan Plander



The 2025 season will soon be upon us. This will be my eleventh season and each year I find more to be thankful for; meeting new people, pink sisters from around the world, learning more from each paddling/coaching clinics and events like Unleash the Dragon, which we attended this past January. As I continue to take note of what I am thankful for, the more I am able to enjoy. Dragon boating has given me so much and helped me through some really tough times. My pink dragon sisters, near and far, are all so inspiring and encouraging to me.

Unleash the Dragon, in a really cold Sarasota, taught me a great deal about paddling, team work, leadership, and even more important, about myself.

The first paddling day was a day like no other. The wind was up, the air was cold, and it was raining. (But it really came in second to the snow that stopped us over night in Georgia.) Getting wet made me colder, but I paddled. The waves were forming white caps, but we were on a lake, and I still paddled.

On race day, it was beautiful. I missed two races. One I chose not to paddle. It was an upside-down paddle race. In hind sight, my aches and pains were an excuse to not paddle where I didn't think I would be any good. The other one, I didn't know I missed. (blonde)

But then the last race came around, a 1,000-meter distance. My first response was, NO WAY!! I even hated 500-meter races. Well, I got myself in the boat, great teammates were very patient with me, then we were off... I paddled to the start, I paddled the first 500 meters and thought, Wow, how did I do that? And I never stopped paddling all 1,000 meters. Knowing what I had accomplished

filled me with such joy, and in turn, thankful for that joy.

I am so excited to experience what 2025 will bring...



Always take  
the sea-nic  
route!!

paddles  
up

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We met Robin in 2016 when she joined our team. She was so sweet and her sparkling blue eyes reflected her heart of gold. She was always helping someone even though she was fighting her own battles. She was always ready with a smile, words of encouragement, and a joke for the joke break during practice. We will always remember her with a joke in our hearts and a pair of blue Platex rubber gloves...

## Robin's Joke Corner



What do you do when a dragon sneezes?  
Get out of the way!!  
What do you call a sad strawberry?  
A blueberry!!

## At Unleash the Dragon

by Jennifer Tyler

Margaret and Cheryl were also on my team. Our team was comprised of women from 6 states who came together as strangers and epitomized teamwork. Our team name was "Not so wimpy women" and we definitely represented that well as we placed #2 overall!!! We dug deep and worked as a harmonious machine! From our steer to our coach/drummer we all came together as one. We competed in distance racing that we as DCDs had never experienced 1000K and 500M knock outs. It was an awesome experience in teamwork and personal perseverance.



## From Irish Dragon Boat Federation March 10th FaceBook Post

Having run the sport for near on 15 years here in Ireland we still get asked. What is dragon boating?



Dragon

boating is an exhilarating water sport with deep cultural and historical roots. Originating over 2,000 years ago in ancient China, it is traditionally tied to the Duanwu Festival, commonly known as the Dragon Boat Festival. This annual event commemorates the poet and statesman Qu Yuan, who, according to legend, drowned himself in protest against corruption. Villagers raced in boats to save him or scare away fish with drums and splashing—laying the foundation for dragon boat racing.

Modern dragon boating is a highly competitive and community-oriented sport. Teams paddle in long, narrow boats that are ornately decorated to resemble dragons, complete with a dragon's head at the front and a tail at the back. Each boat is powered by a synchronized team of paddlers, guided by a drummer at the front of the boat who keeps the rhythm and a steerer who navigates at the rear.

The sport combines strength, endurance, and teamwork, making it as much about camaraderie as athleticism. It has gained popularity worldwide, with events ranging from amateur races to international competitions under the International Dragon Boat Federation (IDBF). Many teams also participate to raise a awareness or funds for charitable causes.

Whether you're drawn to its cultural heritage or its dynamic energy on the water, dragon boating offers a unique blend of tradition, teamwork, and spirited competition.

## In the boat:

by Jane Frost - Abreast in A Boat

We paddle together  
We support each other  
We learn from each other  
We laugh together  
We relish our moments on the water  
We enjoy the thrill of competition  
We are proud of our accomplishments  
We break the silence of cancer  
We make true friends  
We encourage others to get in the boat with us



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## DCD Spring Birthdays



### January:

*Kathie Carman 01/14*

### February:

*Gina Whilhite 02/03*

*Carol Challas 02/10*

*Wendy Medley 02/13*

### March:

*Cindy Whitaker 03/04*

*Jessica Elliott 03/25*

*Stephanie Anderson 3/23*

### April:

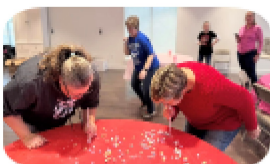
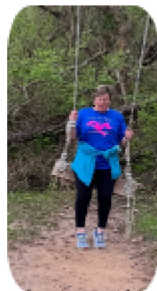
*Claudia Johnson 04/19*

## DCD Team Building

By Cindy Blake

The team building committee has already been working hard this year, our goal is to encourage camaraderie within the team by getting together several times a year to just enjoy each other's company. We recently had a chili cook off at Gilda's club, we hope to make it an annual event. We crowned Michele W as the winner after having a tie breaker with Cindy W. During the event we played a game to see who could collect the most candy hearts in a cup by sucking them with a straw. We scheduled a throwback Thursday event on the Belle of Louisville and scheduled our holiday party. We are looking into a sleepover among other things.

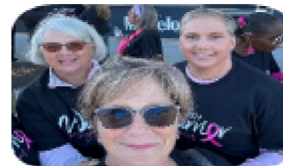
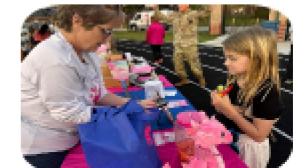
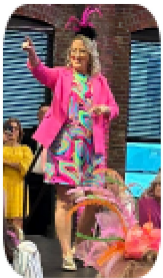
So keep checking your email and TeamSnap for more information,



## Community Outreach

By Sherry Spanyer & Wendy Smithson Co-Chairs

We have 14 members who are working hard to offer team activities which reach out to the local community. Future planned events include: Easter Parade, the Mini/Marathon water stop, the Derby Parade, a special evening at the Bat's Baseball, Lunches for Hildegard House volunteers, workout apparel collection for Healing Place for Women, Project Zero, Dinner Host at Gilda's, Making Strides Walk, Halloween at Brown Park, Festival of Trees, Mayor's Hike, Bike & Paddle and local Health Fairs. Any additional suggestions from DCD members are welcome; just contact Wendy M., Sherry or any committee member. And be sure to check our TeamSnap schedule for information on any events.



"You don't inspire your teammates by showing them how amazing you are. You inspire them by showing them how amazing they are."

— Robyn Benincasa, World Champion Adventure Race



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## Up-Coming Events

- \*\*Dragon Strong 30 min Low Impact Cardio Blast
  - \*\*Buff Bones / HIIT Workout
  - \*\*Walking w/ exercise stations led by Kim
  - \*\*Abs/Butt/Thighs Workout with Carol
  - \*\*Susies Pink Pilates (Zoom)
  - \*\*DCD board meeting
  - \*\*DCD Sleep Over
  - \*\*Marathon Practice
  - \*\*Louisville Easter Parade
- Kentucky Derby Festival:
- April 26th @ 6:30 am - Marathon and Mini Marathon  
Volunteer Water Station
- April 27th @ 1:00 am - Pegasus Parade
- May 10th @ 8:30 am - Spring Paddle Clinic
- May 31st @ 12:00 pm DCD Annual Golf Scramble
- June 6th @ 7:15 pm - DCD Night at the Louisville Bats Game
- \*\* Please check Teamsnap calendar for dates and times.**

### 2025 Festivals:

- July 19th - Dragons on the Lake, Akron, Ohio  
Sept. 6th - Kentucky Dragon Boat Festival, Alexandria, KY  
Sept. 27th - Pittsburgh Dragon Boat Festival, Pittsburgh, PA

## You Can Help Support Us: Kroger Rewards Program:

Did you register your Kroger Card to link to "Derby City Dragons" Community Rewards program yet? By doing this, we will receive a percentage each quarter of all money spent at Kroger when you swipe your Kroger Card. Simply register online at [krogercommunityrewards.com](https://krogercommunityrewards.com)

## The Importance of Exercise and Weight Training for Breast Cancer Survivors

By Georgianna Dotson

As breast cancer survivors and thrivers, we face a journey that extends beyond treatment; it includes rebuilding our strength, confidence, and overall health. The road to recovery is often marked by physical changes, including loss of muscle mass and bone density, as well as the psychological impacts of the disease.

**Engaging in regular exercise helps improve cardiovascular health and increases flexibility—which are vital for recovering for survivors.**

One of the most significant physical challenges faced by breast cancer thrivers and survivors is the loss of muscle mass, which can occur due to the disease itself or the treatments involved, such as chemotherapy and radiation. Engaging in a structured weight training program helps rebuild this muscle mass. Resistance training not only strengthens existing muscles but creates the growth of new muscle fibers, enhancing overall strength and functionality. Plus, when you build physical strength, you're also building emotional strength.

**Another critical concern for breast cancer survivors is bone density loss. Treatments can lead to osteoporosis, making bones more susceptible to fractures. Weight-bearing exercises, such as walking and weight training, are essential for maintaining and improving bone density. By putting stress on the bones, weight training stimulates the bone remodeling process, helping to strengthen them over time.**

For breast cancer survivors and thrivers, weight training is not just about physical rehabilitation; it is a holistic approach to recovery that addresses muscle loss, bone density, and mental health.

By prioritizing consistent exercise with weight training, survivors can enhance their quality of life, both on and off the water, physically and mentally. Research also indicates that consistent physical activity can reduce the risk of cancer recurrence and improve overall quality of life.

Learn to lift weights safely and make sure you're lifting consistently at least three times a week with a structured program such as the LIVESTRONG program at the Y, hire a personal trainer or join an online program such as [W3TribeFitness.com](https://W3TribeFitness.com)

Cheers!  
Coach G



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**W3CoachG@gmail.com**  
**(270) 977-7116**

# DERBY CITY DRAGONS 2025

## GOLF SCRAMBLE

**SATURDAY, MAY 31ST**

**SENECA GOLF COURSE**



**1st Place Prize**



1 night for 4 (2 rooms) at the Rising Star Casino Resort  
and a round of golf for 4 at the Links at Rising Star Casino.

**& \$500 CASH** Donated in loving memory of Bo Pearson

**\$120 per player**

**\$15 Lunch Only**

**12:00 Lunch**

**1:30 Shotgun Start**

Lunch & a goody bag  
for each player

**FUN RAFFLE PRIZES  
INCLUDING OUR  
SIGNATURE  
BOATLOAD OF BOOZE!**



All proceeds benefit Derby City Dragons



**\$550 Corporate Team\***

\*Corporate Team includes:

4 players & a company logo hole sign

**Corporate Sponsorship  
Packages available**

**In Memory of  
and  
In Honor of  
Signs  
only \$50**

**Derby City Dragons**



Use QR code or register at [www.derbycitydragons.org](http://www.derbycitydragons.org)  
[golf@derbycitydragons.org](mailto:golf@derbycitydragons.org)